



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

Michael F. Easley
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AMERICORPS MENTOR YOUTH TO REDUCE JUVENILE CRIME
Program is reducing suspensions and court referrals

Raleigh - Gov. Mike Easley announced today that at-risk youth served by the Governor's One on One program showed an 80 percent reduction in juvenile court referrals and a 58 percent reduction in school suspensions for the 2002-2003 program year.

"AmeriCorps members generously devote their time to helping our state's most vulnerable youth," Gov. Mike Easley said. "Through their efforts, these at-risk students have the assistance, motivation and support they need to turn their lives around and succeed in school and in life."

The Governor's One on One program, overseen by the N.C. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, partners with the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program. Fellows recruit community volunteers to serve as mentors for at-risk students.

Currently,

Leah Smith, an AmeriCorps member serving in New Hanover County with the Governor's One on One program, has mentored an at-risk 4th-grader since January 2003. When Smith was matched with her student in January, the student had failed her end of grade test and was repeating the fourth grade. After working with Smith, the student scored perfectly on her end of grade test and earned a place on the A/B honor roll.

"The student needed the special attention only one-on-one time with an adult can provide," Smith said. "She is truly a unique and gifted person who just needed a little added support and exposure to other positive activities. Through our time together, she was able to realize her true potential and meet both her social and academic challenges."

A copy of the Governor's One on One Mentoring Program's annual report is available on the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's website at www.ncdjjdp.org.